

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Case File No.: AA-82862
AK-040-01-EA-024

Applicant: United States Air Force

Type of
Action: Change the jurisdiction of 1.25 acres by withdrawal

Location: N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 15, T. 17 S., R. 45 W., Seward Meridian, King
Salmon, Alaska

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Preparing
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Anchorage Field Office
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Date: November 8, 2001

I. INTRODUCTION:

The United States Air Force (USAF) has proposed a change of jurisdiction of 1.25 acres that was withdrawn and has been relinquished by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The parcel is located in an area known as the King Salmon Bluff Site.

The 1.25 acres remains undeveloped, but the land adjacent to the site has undergone development. Some of the activity in the vicinity of the site may have adversely impacted the environmental integrity of the property. The USAF has conducted an environmental investigation on the property immediately north of the site. This area was historically used as a drum disposal site and is known to contain contamination in the groundwater and soil. The USAF was held responsible for the cleanup which caused the onset of the remediation project. The USAF is currently monitoring the area as part of their remediation process.

The parcel has two groundwater monitoring wells which are owned by the USAF and authorized by permit issued by the FAA.

A. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action:

The FAA has relinquished 1.25 acres from Air Navigation Site (ANS) 169 to be transferred to the USAF. The purpose of the acquisition is to allow the USAF to control access to a remediation project while it undergoes revegetation.

The project requires long term exclusion of all public access that could cause damage to the vegetation or cause surface erosion. The parcel lies adjacent to the remediation site and will protect the area from intrusion.

B. Conformance With the Land Use Plan:

No land use plan exists for this area. However, this environmental analysis assesses the impacts of the Proposed Action and provides a basis for a decision on the proposal (43 CFR 1610.8(b)(1).

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. Proposed Action:

The Proposed Action is to change jurisdiction by withdrawal of 1.25 acres known as the King Salmon Bluff Site. The proposed parcel is currently within ANS No. 169. The FAA has relinquished the 1.25 acres and the USAF has requested acquisition, by withdrawal, of the site.

King Salmon is located on the northwest side of the upper Alaska Peninsula, adjacent to Bristol Bay on the north bank of the Naknek River. King Salmon is approximately 280 miles southwest of Anchorage and is accessible by air and water.

The legal description is the N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 15, T. 17 S., R. 45 W., Seward Meridian, Alaska. (See the attached map.)

The project requires long term exclusion of all public access that could cause damage to the vegetation or cause surface erosion. The parcel lies adjacent to the remediation site and protects the area from intrusion by acting as a buffer zone.

The 1.25 acres has not had any barrels dumped on it nor has undergone any type of remediation. There is no evidence that the 1.25 parcel contains buried debris or contamination.

The revocation of the 1.25 acres from FAA, and the withdrawal of the same 1.25 acres by the USAF, will be completed within the same Public Land Order (PLO).

B. Alternative:

The only alternative is No Action which would be denial of the application.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A. Critical Elements:

The following critical elements of the human environment are either not present or will not be affected by the Proposed Action.

- Air Quality
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Environmental Justice
- Farmlands, Prime/Unique
- Floodplains
- Invasive/Non-native Species
- Native American Religious Concerns
- T&E Species
- Wetlands/Riparian Zones
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Wilderness

1. Cultural/Paleontological Resources:

The rich resources of land and sea mammals as well as fish have supported the human occupants of the Alaska Peninsula since the Holocene. The Alaska Heritage Resource Survey files were checked for this particular 1.25 acres; no archaeological sites are known for this parcel. Several historic FAA buildings in the general area have been recorded. This parcel will be transferred from one federal agency to another and will continue to remain subject to Federal preservation laws should any previously unknown resources be discovered in the future. This action is administrative in nature and no action is proposed which would endanger previously unknown cultural resources.

2. Subsistence:

The Proposed Action occurs on Federal Public Lands as defined in ANILCA and falls under the regulatory authority of the Federal Subsistence Board. The Proposed Action does not occupy a site of significant size or productivity to produce a sustainable surplus of subsistence resources.

3. Wastes, Hazardous or Solid:

No hazardous or solid wastes are known to be on the property. However, the adjacent USAF property has historically contained hazardous waste and has contaminated soils, groundwater, surface water, and sediment.

4. Water Quality, Surface and Ground:

Water quality on the property is expected to be of good quality. However, the adjacent USAF property has contaminated groundwater and surface water. The USAF property is down gradient and is not expected to have affected this property. Two groundwater monitoring wells were installed on the subject property; water sample analyses detected no contamination.

B. Land Status:

The parcel is currently within ANS No. 169 withdrawn by the FAA. Adjoining lands are administered by the FAA and Bristol Bay Borough.

The FAA has given Notice of Intent to Relinquish, this transfer will revoke the current withdrawal on the parcel.

C. Vegetation:

This parcel is located on a north facing bluff above the King Salmon River. Over fifty percent of the 1.25 acres has been disturbed by the adjacent USAF barrel remediation site and the road. The relatively undisturbed areas are covered by alder, willow, forbs and grasses. Weeds have colonized the area.

D. Wildlife:

The proposed site is within the village of King Salmon, but likely provides habitat for low densities of moose in the areas associated with willow shrubs and mixed forest. Predators such as wolves, and seasonally brown bear, occur in the region, and may occasionally frequent the area, but are unlikely due to the close proximity to King Salmon. Lynx, marten and wolverine also exist in the region, but are highly mobile and naturally occur at low densities, and unlikely near town. Resident and migrant land birds nest and feed in shrub and forest habitats. Bald eagles are common in the area in summer. There have been no wildlife surveys completed in this area to determine numbers and distribution in the area of the Proposed Action

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Critical Elements:

1. Cultural Resources:

The 1.25 acres will remain in Federal ownership and continue to be subject to Federal historic preservation laws. There are no impacts to cultural/paleontological resources.

2. Subsistence:

The Proposed Action will not significantly restrict subsistence uses, decrease the abundance of subsistence resources, alter the distribution of subsistence resources, or limit subsistence user access from currently existing conditions. No further analysis is necessary at this time.

3. Waste, Hazardous or Solid:

No impacts are expected.

4. Water Quality, Surface and Ground:

No impacts are expected.

B. Vegetation:

The change of jurisdiction would not result in a loss of vegetation in the area. Native vegetation would continue to colonize and increase in time. The overall impacts on the integrity of the vegetation within the withdrawn area are expected to be minimal.

C. Cumulative Impacts:

There are no cumulative impacts.

- D. Mitigation Measures:
No mitigation measures are necessary.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

- A. Agencies Consulted:
FAA, Anchorage Office
USAF, Anchorage
USAF, King Salmon
- B. Preparers:
Shirley Rackley, Realty Specialist
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